The Agreement

Of divers

Miniſters of Chriſt

In the County of

WORCESTER,

and ſome adjacent parts,

For Catechizing or Perſonal Inſtructing All in their ſeveral Pariſhes, that will conſent thereunto.

Containing

I. *The Articles of our Agreement.*

II. *An Exhortation to the People to ſubmit to this neceſſary VVork.*

III. *The Profeſſion of Faith, and Catechiſm, which we deſire them firſt to learn.*

The ſecond Edition.

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Our warrant from God.

ACT. 20. 20, 28, 31. *And have taught you publikely, and from house to house. Take heed therefore to your selves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

Luke 12. 42. *Who then is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his houshold, to give them their portion of meat in due season?*

Col. 1. 28. *Whom we preach; warning every man, and teaching every man in all Wisdom, that We may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

Mal. 2. 7. *For the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Messenger of the Lord of hosts.*

Mark 4. 34. *And when they were alone, he expounded all things to his Disciples.*

Heb. 5. 12. *Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. See* 1 Cor. 15. 1, 2, 3. to 8.

1 Cor. 4. 1. *Let a man so account of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the mysteries of God.*

Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.*

1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. *We beseech you brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you: and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake, and be at peace among your selves.*

In the sixth general Council at Trull: *in* Constantinople *it is thus decreed,* Can. 78. [That they that are baptized ought to learn the Belief, and on the fift day of the week to say it over to the Bishop or the Presbyters.]

WE Miniſters of Chriſt, whoſe names are underwritten, having ſought Gods direction, and enquired of his holy word concerning our duty, and finding our ſelves under many obligations to ſeek diligently the edification and ſalvation of ſouls: and withal conſidering the greatneſs of our Work, and the ſhortneſs of our own and our neighbours lives, and the ſtrict account that we and they muſt ſhortly yield to God our Iudge; Do humbly bewail our too great neglect, that we have not more frequently, earneſtly, and unweariedly employed our care, and time, and labour, on ſo great a Work, according to the ſtrict and holy precepts and patterns in Gods Word; eſpecially that we have done no more in Catechizing, and familiar perſonal inſtructing, to acquaint men with the moſt neceſſary points of our Religion, and to work them on their hearts, for the awakening of them from ſecurity, and drawing them from ſin to God, by the faith of Chriſt, and for the directing them in the right way to their everlaſting peace. And as we earneſtly beg of God to pardon this our great neglect, through the blood and interceſſion of Ieſus Chriſt: ſo do we by his grace reſolve to be hereafter more faithful and diligent, and

therefore do unanimously agree and resolve on the particulars following.

I. That we will in the several united Churches of this County & the adjacent parts, where we are Teachers, set apart the day of publikely to humble our souls before God in Fasting and Prayer for our former negligence, and to beg pardon thereof, and of all our miscariages, that the everlasting misery of mens souls may not be charged on our heads; and to seek his direction and assistance for the time to come, and to acquaint our Hearers with their duties, in reference to the following work to be undertaken.

II. That we will hereafter, by Gods assistance, lay out more of our time, and labour, in the foresaid work of Catechizing, and familiar instructing people in the Doctrine of Salvation: And, that ordinarily we will set apart a convenient stated time for this work, at least on one day every week; and in greater Parishes, either two or three; or else more hours on that one day, as our strength and other necessary imployment shall permit. And whereas we have only hitherto Catechized the younger people in publike; we shall now desire either the whole Families to come together by their turns, to a certain place, on a certain stated day, and hour, or so many of them that are not Catechized publikely. And the Clerk or some other fit person shall be sent to them

them ſome days before, to remember them of their turns, and to know whether they will come, or not.

III. We conceive the fitteſt place for the aged, will be the Miniſters houſe, unleſs where ſome ſpecial accident may make another place more Fit. Or if any rather chooſe to do it in the Church, or that their children and ſervants be catechized in publike, and themſelves in private. We ſhall grant their deſire: and though it be the duty of the people to come to the miniſters for inſtruction in any convenient place which they ſhall appoint, which all humble and obedient Chriſtians will readily yield to, yet if any will not come to us, we ſhall go to them, if they conſent to hear us, and to be inſtructed; The like we ſhall do to thoſe who by reaſon of Age or other weakneſs, or diſtance, cannot well come to us, or at leaſt we ſhall procure ſome that are fit for ſuch a work, to go to them, and inſtruct them, if by weakneſs or greater works we are hindred our ſelves.

IV. If any be unwilling to be catechized, or inſtructed before the reſt of the family, we ſhall do it as privately as they pleaſe; only we ſhall catechize the women, eſpecially the younger ſort in the preſence of ſome of the reſt, leſt malicious wicked perſons ſhould make it an occaſion of ſcandal and reproach: but we ſhall

as carefully as we can avoid the opening of t
weakneſſes of parents, or maſters, in the hearing
their children, or ſervants, in any way that m
tend to the diminiſhing of their authority and d
reſpect.

V. We ſhall deſire all our pariſhioners, old a
young, that are able, to learn the ancient Cree
with our Expoſitory profeſſion, or Catechiſm, co
taining it, the ten Commandments and the Lor
prayer, and the Aſſemblies ſhorter Catechiſm; a
thoſe that cannot (at leaſt without longer time
learn the Catechiſm, we deſire them firſt to learn
the reſt; and thoſe that cannot ſo ſoon learn ou
profeſsion, we ſhall expect at leaſt that they learn th
Creed, the Commandments, and the Lords praye
and endeavour to learn the reſt in further time,
they are able; or if any pretend ſcruples againſ
our *Profeſſion*, or the *allowed Catechiſm*, they ſha
uſe any Orthodox Catechiſm which themſelves wi
chooſe.

VI. When we receive an account from them o
what they have learned of theſe heads of Cate
chiſm, we ſhall alſo faithfully endeavour to help
them in the right underſtanding of them, and t
get the truths which they learn into their hearts an
lives; in all which we ſhall endeavour as prudentl
as we can, to ſuit our Inſtructions and Queſtions t
the capacity of the perſons to whom we ſpeak. No
ſeeking

ſeeking to diſgrace them, or puzzle them by hard unneceſſary queſtions or words, but expreſs the plaineſt neceſſary truths in the plaineſt words; and if they underſtand not one phraſe, we ſhall try whether they underſtand the ſame truth in other phraſes: nor ſhall we ſtand ſo much on their words as their meanings; and if they be not able to deliver a fundamental truth in any tolerable words of their own, we ſhall try by their affirmations or negations whether indeed they underſtand it, or believe it, when they hear it expreſt by us: we ſhall endeavour alſo to uſe ſuch love and meekneſs as may win, and avoid ſuch harſh imperious ſpeeches as may offend; and to uſe ſuch ſerioufneſs as may tend to awaken the ſtupid and ſecure, leſt all our labour with them be loſt, and yet ſuch tenderneſs, as that the weak may not be diſcouraged. And becauſe it is a work that requireth ſuch great prudence and holy skill, together with zeal, and patience, we ſhall the more reverently and cautelouſly attempt and mannage it, avoiding all raſhneſs, obſerving and lamenting, and ſtriving againſt our imprudency, unskilfulneſs, and other unfitneſſes; and earneſtly beg of God more fitneſs for his work.

VII. Thoſe that have not learned the words of any of the aforeſaid Principles or Catechiſms, we ſhall yet deſire to come to us with the reſt of their families, that we may have opportunity familiarly to diſcourſe with them, and inſtruct them.

VIII. We

VIII. We ſhall deſire that the moſt learned, or judicious and Godly people among us would ſubmit to this courſe, as well as others, though they have not the like need, leſt their forbearance be a pretence to others to keep off; eſpecially ſeeing the wiſeſt and Godlieſt men are bound by God to obey their teachers and guides, as well as others; and all Chriſtians have need to keep the great fundamental truths ſtill in memory, for their daily uſe, that they may live upon them; and the beſt may yet get ſome advantage by ſuch conferences, which miniſters will fit to their riper ſtate.

IX. Having procured this our Agreement to be printed, together with an exhortation to our people to ſubmit to this work, we ſhall firſt read both to them in the publike aſſembly upon ſome Lords day, and afterward give and cauſe to be delivered one Copy thereof to each family in our ſeveral pariſhes that will accept them, deſiring them that they may be read to all the family.

X. As for thoſe that after ſufficient admonition ſhall contemptuouſly and obſtinately refuſe to be either *Catechized*, or *Inſtructed*, thus perſonally by us, giving us no valuable reaſon of their refuſal, if they are ſuch that have profeſſed themſelves members of our Charge, in the particular Churches wherof we are Paſtors, we ſhall proceed as in other caſes of ſcandal, or impenitency, till we have either prevailed for their refor-

reformation, or else rejected and avoided them. And if they are such that are only members of the Parish, and have withdrawn themselves from our charges and the particular Church, by refusing to own and profess their membership, we shall yet so far d fference them from the rest of the Parish, who are Tractable and Teachable (though refusing to be of our particular Church, and charge) as that we shall, in regard of Communion, and the application of sealing and confirming ordinances, deal with them as the obstinate despisers of instruction should be deal: with.

THE reasons which move us to this Agreement and Resolution, are these following.

1. As it is undeniable that the everlasting perdition of multitudes is caused by their ignorance, and people perish for lack of knowledge; so is it most evident that catechizing and familiar personal instruction, is a great means to overcome that killing ignorance; and that much of the darkness of this Land is chargeable on the neglect of this necessary work.

2. The aged among us are too commonly more Ignorant then the younger sort; and though their souls should be as much regarded by them, yet have we

we no hope of prevailing with these to come publikely on the Lords day, in the face of the congregation, to be catechized; but yet we are in hope that fewer of them will refuse to come to us in private; and seeing we are thus necessitated to deal in private with one part of the family, if it be their desire, we shall take all together in the same way; Perhaps one will encourage another. We observe also, that the younger when they are once married, will come no more to be catechized publikely, and so too many forget that which before they had learned, which this course may prevent.

3. It is the principles and fundamental truths that life or death doth most depend upon, and in which the essentials of Christianity do consist; which therefore no man may be utterly ignorant of, that hopeth for salvation; and which the ripest Christians have the greatest daily use for, and most continually live upon as their bread and drink; and those that are well grounded in these fundamentals, are likest to stand in a time of trial, and to resist temptations, and to hold fast, and grow up in the knowledge of the superstructure; and it is the want of being well grounded in these fundamentals, that is the cause of much of the heresie and apostacy of this Age. It is the improvement of these principles that is the true Christians daily work for the managing of his duties, the quickning and ordering of his affections, and the guidance of his life; and it is the

the want of ſound digeſting and improving of theſe that is the cauſe of much of the hypocriſie, and ſelf-deceiving opinionative and factious kind of Religiouſneſs, that hath ſo prevailed: In a word, the benefit of right Catechizing, and the miſchiefs that follow the neglect of it, are more indeed then we can expreſs or conceive.

4. We finde by ſad experience, that the people underſtand not our publike teaching, though we ſtudy to ſpeak as plain as we can, and that after many years preaching, even of theſe ſame fundamentals, too many can ſcarce tell any thing that we have ſaid, when yet we finde that they better underſtand and lay to heart a familiar Conference.

5. The Lords day is ſhort enough for the publike worſhip of God and preaching of the word, with thoſe private duties which are neceſſary in our Families, though we reſerve Catechizing, at leaſt of the aged, to another day, eſpecially in the Winter, when the daies are ſhort.

6. By this means we ſhall better know the ſtate of our hearers, and better know how to ſpeak publikely to their neceſsities, and how to pray for them; and how far either to bemoan them, or rejoyce over them; and we ſhall better underſtand their capacity and fitneſs for Communion and Sacraments.

7. If

7. If we appoint not a ſtated time and place fo
this work, we cannot tell how to have any fit oppor
tunity for it: becauſe we know not when to find
people at leiſure together, and prepared thereto
nor can every weak Miniſter endure the attendanc
and inconvenience of ſome of their houſes, for
long time, without apparent injury to their health o
lives.

8. The diligence of Papiſts and Sectaries will
condemn us, if we will not do half ſo much in
right way, to ſave mens ſouls, as they will do in
wrong way to pervert them. The Papiſts will bring
all the people to confeſs their moſt ſecret ſins in ſe
cret to their Prieſts; and we have heard of ſome
that have approved of their Church rather then ours,
becauſe it is more ſtrict in ſuch practiſes. The Secta
ries of other Sects creep into houſes, and lead cap
tive the ſilly people by their ſmooth deceiving
words and induſtry: If we then that have a better
work to do, ſhall betray mens ſouls by lazy negli
gences, all theſe might riſe up againſt us and con
demn us.

9. The work that we agree upon is of unqueſtion
able neceſſity; it is not of the controverted mat
ters, where ſome godly men are of one minde, and
ſome of another: we know of no party reputed
ſober and pious among us, but are all agreed of the
uſefulneſs and excellency, which is more then the
law-

lawfulneſs of this Catechizing, and familiar Inſtruction; and we obſerve them all as with one minde and mouth, complaining of the neglect of it, and commending the performance; we think it therefore a ſad and unexcuſable thing, that while we contend about controverſies, moſt ſhould neglect that neceſſary work which all approve of, even while they thus neglect it.

10. It is a work wherein we have the countenance of authority. Former Rulers commanded Catechizing, and the preſent do not diſcountenance it, but encourage us to ſuch works. It hath been the conſtant Practiſe of the Primitive Church, who had oft their Catechiſts to teach theſe principles; and all Ages have allowed it without any conſiderable contradiction: And the Catechiſm which we agree to uſe, was approved by the Church Aſſemblies of *England* and *Scotland*, as a part of the Uniformity.

11. We receive the publike maintenance to this end, that we may be enabled to lay out our endeavour for the good of the whole Pariſhes from which we do receive it: and therefore we are further obliged in Juſtice to do our beſt for the ſalvation of them all.

Upon these plain and pressing Reasons (among others) we find our selves called to lament our former negligence, and more diligently to perform this needful work, and to exhort our Parishioners to encourage us by their submission and willingness; and we do resolve upon a more faithful discharge of this duty to those that shall thus submit.

Subscribed by

Richard Baxter, Teacher of the Church at *Kidderminster.*
John Boraston Pastor of *Ribsford* and *Bewdly.*
Richard Eades Pastor of *Beckford*, Glocestershire.
Charls Nott Minister of *Shelsly.*
James Warwick Minister at *Hanly Castle.*
Thomas Eavans Minister at *Welland.*
Thomas Wright Teacher at *Hartlebury.*
John Nott Teacher at *Sheriff Hales*, Staffordshire.
Henry Oasland Teacher of the Church at *Bewdly.*
John Hill Minister at *Clifton* upon *Team.*
Thomas Baldwin Minister at *Wolverley.*
Richard Wolley Minister at *Salwarp.*
John Freeston Minister at *Hampton Lovet.*
Richard Sergeant Preacher at *Kidderminster.*
Andrew Tristram Pastor of the Church at *Clent.*
Thomas Bromwich Minister at *Kemsey.*
Thomas Frank Teacher at *Nanton Beachamp.*
John Taylor Minister at *Dudley.*

William

William Spicer Minister of *Stone.*
Humphry Waldern Minister of *Broom.*
Samuel Bowater Rector of *Astley.*
Benjamin Baxter Minister at *Upton* upon *Severn.*
William Lole Minister at *Pyrton.*
Thomas Francis Minister at *Doderhil.*
Thomas Jackman Minister at *Burrough.*
William Durham Pastor of *Tredington.*
Thomas Easton Pastor of *Batesford*, Glocestershire.
Giles Collier Pastor of the Church at *Blockly.*
George Hopkins } Ministers of the Gospel at
Thomas Matthew } *Evesham.*
John Dolphin Pastor of the Church at *Honniborn.*
Joseph Trebel Pastor at *Church Lench.*
William Willes Preacher at *Cleve.*
Richard Beeston Preacher of the Gospel at *Breedon.*
William Kimberly Minister at *Ridmarley.*
Joseph Baker } Preachers of the Gospel in the
Richard Fincher } City of *Worcester.*
John Wilmot Preacher at *Parshore.*
Francis Hyat Minister at *Eckington.*
Robert Brown Minister at *White-Lady Aston.*
Jarvis Bryan Pastor of the Church at *Old Swinford* and *Sturbridge.*
John Dedicot Preacher at *Abbotsly.*
Stephen Baxter Preacher at *Harvington.*
Joseph Kettle Minister at *Beeley.*
Thomas Soley Preacher at *Mitton* in *Kidderminster* Parish.
Cornelius Woodward Minister at *Pebbleton.*

George Boraſton Miniſter at *Hightington.*
Richard Moor Preacher at *Alchurch.*
Ioſiah Rock Miniſter at *Rowly*, Staffordſhire.
Lancelot Bromwich Preacher at *Enfield*, Staffordſhire.
Roger Kimberly Miniſter at *Kinver*, Staffordſhire.
Richard Good Miniſter at *Neen*, Shropſhire.
Robert Durant Miniſter at *Higley*, Shropſhire.
Iohn VVheeler Miniſter at *Hopton*, Shropſhire.
Richard Hinks Miniſter at *Tipton.*
Thomas Garland } Miniſters at *Droitwich.*
Robert Norbury }
VVilliam Shaw Miniſter at *Ruſhock.*

An

An Exhortation to all our Pariſhioners to ſubmit to this Neceſſary work of Catechizing and perſonal Inſtruction, which we have Agreed on, for the furthering of their own Salvation.

To all the Inhabitants of our ſeveral Pariſhes, Grace and Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

DEarly beloved Brethren, whoſe ſouls are pretious both to Chriſt and us, and whoſe Peace and Salvation we do earneſtly deſire. It hath pleaſed the God of all the Earth to call out this poor unworthy Iſland in the utmoſt parts of the world, to make it his garden, while others remain a wilderneſs: and a Land of light, while others live in horrid darkneſs; Here hath he Proclaimed the Goſpel of his dear Son, and made plain to us the way to everlaſting felicity: He hath not dealt ſo with every Nation, nor have they heard and ſeen what we have done. Moſt of the world do lie in the darkneſs of Heatheniſh Idolatry, Infidelity and Mahometaniſm: and too much of Chriſtendom in the darkneſs of Popery and Hereſie. It hath pleaſed the Lord of the Harveſt, to ſend forth La-

bourers into this part of his Harveſt; though, w confeſs, too weak and imperfect, yet more nume rous, and faithful, and diligent, then moſt of hi Churches elſewhere Proportionably can ſhew. He hath wonderfully diſpelled the miſts of Popery, and many of his ſervants have laid down their lives in the flames in witneſs againſt it; and with a mighty hand hath he hitherto hindred its return. We have the holy Scriptures faithfully tranſlated into our own Language, and Bibles ſo common, that every family may have one or more at a ſmall price, and may make them the matter of their daily exerciſe. We have this Scripture weekly at leaſt read and preached to us publikely: we have the living examples of many that fear God, in whoſe hearts his Law is written, though imperfectly, and in whoſe lives it is expreſt. We have very great Numbers of excellent Books, expounding this Scripture, and plainly directing us in the way to Salvation; ſo that we know no Nation that in their own tongue hath the like. And among the reſt we have the ſumm of Chriſtian Religion in Catechiſms, in ſo ſmall a room, that the weak may learn, underſtand, and remember it.

Yet after theſe wonderful mercies and means, we muſt needs confeſs it, to the grief of our ſouls, that many thouſands in this Land of light, do wilfully live in darkneſs: And whereas they might all, for the time and means, have been able to teach others, they have need to be taught again the very principles of Gods Oracles, and to be fed as babes

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29931

with milk, and not with ſtrong meat, as being unskilful in the word of Righteouſneſs, *Heb.* 5. 12, 13, 14. It aſtoniſheth us many times when we have occaſion to talk with ſome of our hearers, to perceive that they know very little of the Doctrine which we have been preaching to them ſo many years, as plainly as we could ſpeak: If we could ſpeak plainer to them, we would; for we know it is a matter that they muſt underſtand or periſh. It is ſad to us to hear many men, that can talk underſtandingly about matters of the world, that can ſcarce ſpeak a word of ſenſe about the matters of their Salvation, or ſcarce give us any reaſonable anſwer, if we Queſtion them about the very fundamentals of Chriſtianity, without the knowledge of which they cannot be ſaved.

Upon this ſad experience of mens Ignorance, we have been brought to a deep Conſideration of our own Neglects; and the Lord hath partly ſet it home upon our hearts, and in the apprehenſion thereof our ſouls have been brought low, to think how we have wronged Chriſt, and you, and leſt God ſhould require your blood at our hands. For though we have frequently and faithfully taught you in publik, which is enough to leave you without excuſe, yet perceiving that it muſt be a more familiar courſe that muſt help the extreamly ignorant to underſtand, we lament that we have done no more in it then we have done. And though ſome of us have hitherto excuſed our ſelves, by our bodi-

ly weakneſs, or other preſſing buſineſs of our ca
ling, and from your neglect of coming to us accord
ing to your duty; yet dare we no longer be guilty
of theſe excuſes, while we diſcern any further mean
to be uſed for your good. Having therefore sough
Gods direction, and Conſulted together with hi
word before our eyes, we do all with one mind
Agree and Reſolve to ſet upon the practiſe of Con-
ſtant Catechizing, and perſonal familiar Inſtructi-
on of all that ſhall not obſtinately refuſe our help:
and this we ſhall do, by Gods aſſiſtance, according
to the Rules which we have hereunto adjoyned.
And becauſe we cannot expect that the Aged and
Rich ſhould be perſwaded to be Catechized in the
open Congregation, and becauſe it is many waies in-
convenient that we ſhould go from houſe to houſe,
if we can avoid it, and it is your unqueſtionable duty
to ſeek to your Teachers, and obey them in as great
a thing as this; we do earneſtly intreat you, that you
will ſubmit to this order, and willingly come to the
place which the Miniſter ſhall appoint, even your
whole families in their turns, when they are called,
both old and young; and that Parents and Maſters
will lead their children and Servants, and give them
a good example, and not Condemn themſelves by
refuſing that duty which they confeſs their children
ſhould perform: eſpecially ſeeing ignorance in the
Aged is a double ſin and ſhame. We intreat you
alſo that you will beſtow ſome time and labour, to
learn by memory, the Common Creed, with our Ex-

poſitory

pository Profession, and the ten Commandments, and the Lords Prayer, and this small Catechism, and the shorter Catechism of the Assembly of Divines. And if you cannot read, get some to read them to you that can. We intreat you also to take some pains to see that your families do all learn the same: and especially bestow all that time on the Lords day in this exercise, which can be spared from the greater parts of Gods service: As also that you would bring all your family with you (except the children who are Catechized in the Congregation) at the time, and to the place that shall be appointed, there to render some account of what you learn, and to entertain some familiar conference about it, that you may be further Instructed in the way to life. If you know never so much already, we suppose you will not lose your labour: and the most Judicious should be the most humble, Obedient and exemplary to the weak. If you have learned never so little, and find it hard to remember the words, yet we intreat you to come with the rest, for some familiar Conference and Instruction: For the less you know and remember, the more help you need.

Now the Lord hath awakened us his unworthy Messengers to the sense of our duty, O do not you discourage us, and please the Devil, and frustrate all our work and hopes, by your wilful refusal; especially when we call you to no Controverted work, but that which all the sober Christians in the world

world will confeſs to be your duty: In ſome other matters, ſome are of one mind, and ſome of another but, through the great mercy of God, it is not ſo here. You can have no ſuch excuſe to cover your refuſal: but if you will not Learn and Obey, you muſt even ſpeak out, and ſay you will not, and tell God plainly ſo to his face, and ſo let your nakedneſs appear to all. Now God hath put it into our hearts to do you good, and cauſed us to thirſt after the welfare of your ſouls, we beſeech you take heed of Refuſing your mercies. If you come to us to enquire the way to ſalvation, we dare not for all the world refuſe to teach you; for then how ſhould we meet the Lord in Judgement, and look him in the face that made us watchmen for mens ſafeties! How then Dare you refuſe to be Taught, or to beſtow your time and labour for to Learn?

Dear Brethren, the Lord who is our Judge and yours, knows, that it is not a deſire to domineer over your Conſciences; nor any pleaſure that we take in needleſs troubling you; much leſs any ill will to you, that cauſed us to take up this Reſolution, and to call you to this work; But it is the ſenſe of our former ſin and preſent duty, and of the great Neceſsity hereof to your Salvation. Alas, fleſh and blood hath kept us from this duty too long already; and if we would hearken to it, we ſhould not ſo much trouble our ſelves or you, but let you alone in your ſinful Ignorance; you may quickly underſtand that it is far eaſier to us to pleaſe you, and let you alone!

Indeed,

Indeed, we cannot but expect that this work which we have now undertaken, should bring upon us much more labour or trouble to the flesh, then all our Publike preaching doth. We are frail sinners, and have flesh and blood as well as you, that would fain draw us back from such troublesome duties, and perswade us to take our ease, and not to lose the love of our neighbours by molesting them; But woe to us and you if this should prevail! you should therefore rather encourage us and warn us to be Diligent, and to take heed to our Ministery, which we have received in and of the Lord, and to fulfil it, *Col.* 4. 17. If we were Stewards for the supply of your bodily wants, you would call to us for help, and not stay till we seek to you; much less would you refuse it. We have all need to joyn heart and hand, to help one another safe to Heaven; and all little enough, when we have such enemies within and without us; and so many difficulties before us to overcome. We know that you will have many Temptations from Satan, to keep you back from this profitable work; He that is unwilling of your Salvation, will be unwilling that you should learn the way to it. He will perswade the Rich and worldly-wise that it is a business unbeseeming them to be Catechized or Instructed; As if they were too good to Obey Christ and his Officers, or to be saved! He will perswade the Aged that they are too old to learn, and that it is only for Children or the younger sort; As if they were too old to be saved!

ved! or as if it were not yet time to learn how t
Live, when they have almoſt done Living; or ho
to Dye, when Death is ſo neer! Alas, that any re
ſonable ſoul ſhould be ſo bruitiſh, when moſt o
their lives is already ſpent in Ignorance and world
lineſs, and living to the fleſh, and they ſhould ſpeedi
ly lament their former folly, and Redeem the litt
time that doth remain; when one would think the
ſhould day and night be afraid, leſt Death ſhould
ſnatch them away in their ſin and Ignorance; tha
yet they ſhould not only delay and loyter, but wil
fully refuſe, and ſay they are too old to learn! When
you know Certainly that you muſt be ſhortly in
another world, in endleſs Joy or Torment, is it not
time to know what world it muſt be? Or at leaſt
to uſe your utmoſt diligence that you miſcarry not
in a matter of ſuch unſpeakable Conſequence? Should
not the old, that are neereſt their Journeys end, be
moſt careful to know whither they are going, and
where that end will be, and to ſee leſt they have hi-
therto miſt the way? While there is life and time,
there is hope of mercy, if you have but willing minds
to uſe Gods means; but if you remain unwilling till
time be gone, there will never be the leaſt hope of
Remedy more. Truly Brethren, if Chriſtianity were
a fable, and there were no ſuch things as Heaven or
Hell when this ſhort life is ended, but men dyed as
dogs do, we ſhould never then trouble your minds
with theſe matters, but let you live in eaſe and
pleaſure while you may. But we know that the
Living

Living God is True; and Heaven and Earth ſhall ſooner fail, then one tittle of his ſacred Word. We know that we and you are haſting to the Judgement ſeat of Chriſt, where we muſt be accountable for our Teaching, and you of your learning, and both of our Obeying and Love to the Truth, and of all the time and means that we did poſſeſs. We know that it is but a little while till we and you muſt be all gone hence, and the places where we live muſt know us no more. We know that then we ſhall wiſh we had been more diligent in Teaching, and you will wiſh you had been more diligent in Learning; and all of us in Obeying! O Sirs, what ſhould you ſo much think on, as the God whom you ſay you love and honour, and the Heaven that you ſay you hope for ever to enjoy, and the neceſſary way that leads thereto? if you are Chriſtians, what ſhould you more mind, then Chriſt and his Benefits? *Col.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Mat.* 16. 19, 20, 21, 23. *Ioh.* 6. 27. Will you drop out of the world, before you have well Conſidered what you had to do in it? will you loſe the laſt hour or part of your Lives as you have done the reſt? yea and make that a reaſon for it? As if you would not Learn in your Age, becauſe you learned no ſooner? will you live all your youth with purpoſes to repent and turn to God in your Age? and then when Age comes, will you refuſe to Return, becauſe you did it not ſooner? What is this but to abuſe Chriſt all your youth, and then abuſe him more in your Age, becauſe you abuſed him in your youth!

How

How will you think of this fooliſh wickedneſs when you look back upon it in Hell, if your ſound Repentance and Returning to God by Chriſt prevent it not? Believe it, true Repentance is a through turning from the fleſh and the world to God; and not only a wiſh that you had been wiſer; which is meerly forced by the ſight of death! woe to that man for ever, that dyeth before he hath done the buſineſs of his life: and that muſt go to Chriſts Judgement, before Chriſt have had his heart! We beſeech you therefore rather lay by any thing then theſe needful works; you have nothing elſe to mind, that in compariſon of this is worth the minding: it is for this that all things elſe muſt be Uſed. In themſelves they are but as childrens toys; will you play with them till they and you do fall together into the duſt? and that while greater things ſtand by? It is Chriſt and Grace, and the promiſed Glory that will never deceive you, if you will but ſeek him, and ſet your heart upon him, and eſteem him above theſe tranſitory things, and make it the chief buſineſs of your life to Pleaſe and Enjoy him; which cannot be without the Knowledge of him. Is it not pitty that God ſhould have any Reaſonable Creature that Knoweth not his Maker or his Laws, or his own happineſs? Is it not pitty after all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered for the world, that any that call themſelves his Diſciples ſhould ſo little know him, and the ſalvation which he hath purchaſed, and ſhould ſet ſo light by him, as to reject his invitations? and

ſo

ſo neglect this great ſalvation *Math.* 22. 5, 6. *Heb.* 2. 3. O that you had but felt what it is to be under the bond of Gods Commands! eſpecially the great Command of the Goſpel; then you would *ſee that you refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: For if they ſcaped not that refuſed* Moſes *that ſpake on Earth: much more ſhall not we eſcape if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven,* Heb. 12. 25. O that you did feel but what it is to be under the power of conſtraining Love! 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. And to have the *Love of Chriſt ſhed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghoſt!* Rom. 5. 5. And the Spirit to *write Chriſts Law within you! Heb.* 10. 16. Then would you long for more of Chriſt, and run after him in his Ordinances with thirſting ſouls, and delight in his Law, and meditate in it day and night, and love his Teachings, and delight to do his will, *Rom.* 7. 22. *Pſal.* 1. 2, 3. *Pſal.* 10. 8. & 119. 24. 77. 35. & 40. 1, 2. Theſe things would not only be your buſineſs, but your Pleaſure: even your meat and drink, *Iob.* 23. 12. *O that you did know in this your day the things that belong unto your Peace, before they are hid from your eyes!* Luke 19. 41, 42. And that you would once ſoberly Conſider what it is to be in everlaſting Joy or Torments! and that you would live as men that believe theſe things indeed!

We do yet again beſeech you in the name of him that Made you, and Redeemed you, and for the ſake of your own immortal ſouls, that you will not be ſo ſtout, or ſelf-conceited, or ſo careleſs, or ſo contempuous

temptuous of the Grace of God, as to refuse come to your Teachers to be Catechized and ſtructed, or to beſtow your labour in learning the Principles. You can loſe but little by it, and on that which however you ſhall ſhortly loſe. Yo may get that which ſhall never be loſt. O what Glory would it be to our Pariſhes, and to th Land, if you would all joyn as with one mind t learn and ſtudy the things of Chriſt! what a Jo would this be to the hearts of your Teachers, to ſe you readily with one accord to come to them fo Inſtruction, and obey the word! All the wealth o the world would not ſo glad them, or do them ſo much good as this would do. But what a Grief i it to our hearts at preſent to think, that ſo many of you do live in wilful Darkneſs, and will not uſe the means to get out! and to think what is like to become of you for ever, if death ſhall find you in this ſad Condition! Now we are neer you, and fain would ſee your hearty change. But then, betwixt us and you what a gulf would there be ſet? *Luk.* 16. 26. The word of God will certainly be made good: And, he hath expreſly ſaid, that *if the Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *And people periſh where viſion faileth, and for lack of knowledge*, Prov. 1. 22, 29. & 29. 18. Hoſ. 4. 6. And *when a people have no underſtanding,*

he

he that made them will not save them, and he that formed them will shew them no Favour, Isa. 27. 11. *that the heart be without knowledge, it is not good*, Prov. 19. 2. *To know God and his son Christ, is Eternal life*: John 17. 3. How sadly doth God call even to the *Heaven and Earth* to hear his Complaint against his people! *Isa.* 1. 3, 4. because *he had brought up a people and they rebelled against him: the Ox knew his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib, but* Israel *knew not God; his people would not Consider.* Give not God cause to complain thus of you, lest you prove your selves the complainers in the end.

It grieveth us also to see so many untaught children and families among you! to see the Lords day so idly spent, when you have so much of this necessary work to do! To see so many of you either live without the Lords Supper, and the holy Communion of the Church, or else expect it when you know not what you do. And it much grieveth us when we come to visit the sick, and would fain speak Comfort to their departing souls, and find them in so Ignorant and Carnal a state that we dare not do it. O what a trouble must this needs be to our minds! You look that we should speak Peace to you at the hour of Death, that will not learn the way of Peace in your life, but rather abhor it, and wilfully reject it. But that is a thing that we may not do; and if we should do it, we should but deceive you.

Brethren, take time and mercy, while the God of

mercy doth offer it you! Think not a little labo
too much, to learn that which must be Learn
upon pain of Damnation; and which may make y
Happy for ever. It is the highest, the noblest, a
sweetest work that you can mind, or be imploy
in! Other things are drudgery to this, and m
give place to it. Harden not therefore your hea
against the Instruction and help that is offered yo
It is none of our purpose to question you in matte
of Schollarship, but of meer Christianity; nor
shame the Ignorant, but to teach them; not
puzzle you with hard unnecessary Questions, bu
to speak to you according to your several Capac
ties. You can learn a trade to live by! And coul
you not learn the way to Heaven if you were
willing and diligent? you pray that *the will of Go
may be done*: and will you not learn to do it? yo
pray, that *his Kingdom may come*, and *his Nam
be Hallowed*: and will you not learn to Know the
nature and dignity of his Kingdom, and how to hal
low his blessed Name? God is willing to Teach
you, and therefore hath sent his Son to be your
Teacher: All Christians are his Disciples or Schol
lars: and its an ill Schollar that Refuseth to Learn,
or be taught. Christs way of Teaching is, joyntly
by his Ministers, Word, and Spirit: if you Refuse
these, you refuse Christ: And though you may
think it is but a man that you despise, yet God
himself saith, *He that despiseth, despiseth not man, but
God*, 1 Thes. 4. 8. *And he that despiseth you, despi-
seth*

seth me, Luke 10. 16. And *he that despiseth him shall be lightly esteemed*, and despised by him in the day of his Necessity, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Prov.* 1. 24. to the end. And *he that despiseth Knowledge, shall be destroyed*, Prov. 13. 13. O how much better would it seem to us, if you would go along with us Cheerfully in the way of Salvation, then to force us to be witness against you to your Condemnation! For Christ hath said, that if people receive not his Messengers, and *hear them not, they must depart, and shake off the dust of their feet as a Testimony against them*; And he hath assured us that *it shall be more tolerable for* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *in the day of Judgement, then for that City*, Mark 6. 11. Math. 10. 14, 15.

Finally Brethren, we conclude with the repetition of our former request, that if God have so much interest in you, if Christ and the holy Ghost have so much interest in you, if your own Salvation be any of your interest, or if we your Teachers and friends have any interest in you, we earnestly beseech you, that not one family, nor one person, old or young would deny us this request which we make, to our own Labour, but for your Good; First that you would take some pains to Learn over the Creed, with our Expository Profession, the Ten Commandments, and the Lords Prayer, our small Catechism, and the Assemblies shorter Catechism. Secondly that you would see that all your Children and Servants (that are capable) learn them:

especially on the Lords day. Thirdly, that you would not refuse to come when you are called, to give your Teachers an account of your Knowledge and (how little soever you have learned, yet) to receive Instruction by them. And think it not too much that we desire you to come to us; for as you know it is a more regular and certain way for all to come to one place, then for us to go seek after every person, not knowing where and when to find them; so is it no more then you owe to your Teachers (in order to your own good;) when God hath made them *Stewards of his household, to give them their meat in due season,* Luke 12. 42. Tit. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. and hath Commanded you *to obey them that have the Rule over you; for they watch for your souls, as those that must give account, that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief, for that is unprofitable for you.* And Mal. 2. 7. *For the Priests lips should keep Knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*

If the Lord bow your hearts sincerely to yield to this our advice, it will be the Joy of your Families, the honour of your Towns, Parishes and Country, a good example for the whole Nation to imitate, and it will be the Comfort of your Teachers, and a good preparative to your own everlasting Peace; so great benefits will follow a Small, a Certain, a Reasonable duty. But if after all that we can say or do, you unthankfully and obstinately refuse the

help

help that is freely offered you, your Blood will be upon your own heads; and your Conſciences ſhall bear us witneſs that we made you this offer; and this our Exhortation ſhall riſe up in Judgement for a witneſs againſt you; And then Chriſt will have the glory of his Juſtice on all that ſet ſo light by the Riches of his Grace.

May 4th.
1655.

These are the Teſtimonies, Warnings and requeſts of us the ſervants of Chriſt for the ſaving of your ſouls, whoſe names are before written.

The Ancient Western CREED.

I *Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin* Mary; *suffered under* Pontius Pilate; *was Crucified, dead and buryed; he descended into Hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: he ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the Right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to Judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost: the holy Catholick Church: the Communion of Saints: the forgiveness of sins: the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life everlasting.*

The Lords Prayer, *Math.* 6.

OUR Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name: Thy Kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven: Give us this day our daily bread: And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever, Amen.

The ten Commandments. *Exod.* 20.

GOD spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the Fathers

upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of th
that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them
love me, and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vai
for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his nam
in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy: six days sha
thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sa
bath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, tho
nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy mai
servant, nor thy cattel, nor the stranger that is within thy gate
for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea
and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefo
the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may b
long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy Neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours house, thou shalt not covet
thy neighbours wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant,
nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbours.

The

The fuller profession of our Faith, taken out of Scripture for the better understanding of the Creed.

I Believe that there is One only God *[The Father,] Infinite in Being, Wisdom, Goodness and Power: the Maker, Preserver, and Disposer of all things; and the most Just and Merciful Lord of all.

*or [*in three Persons, the Father, The Son, and the Holy Ghost.*]

I Believe that Mankind being fallen by sin from God and Happiness, under the wrath of God, the curse of his Law, and the Power of the Devil, God so loved the world, that he gave his only son to be their Redeemer, who being God, and one with the Father, did take to him our nature, and became man, being conceived of the Holy Ghost in the Virgin *Mary*, and born of her, and named Jesus Christ; and having lived on earth without sin, and wrought many Miracles for a witness of his truth, he gave up himself a sacrifice for our sins, and a Ransome for us, in suffering death on the Cross: and being Buried, he rose again the third day, and afterward Ascended into Heaven, where he is Lord of All, in Glory with the Father: And having Ordained that all that truly Repent, and Believe in him, and love him above all things, and sincerely Obey him, and that to the death, shall be saved; and they that will not shall be damned; and commanded his ministers to preach the Gospel to the world; He will come again, and raise the bodies of all men from Death, and will Iudge all men according to what they have done in the body: and the Righteous shall go into life eternal, and the rest into everlasting Punishment.

I Believe that God the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, was sent from the Father(*) by the Son, to inspire and guide the Prophets, and

(*) or *and* Apostles

Apostles, that they might fully reveal the doctrine of Christ, and by multitudes of evident miracles and wonderful gifts, to be the great witness of Christ, and of the truth of his holy word, and also to dwell and work in all that are drawn to believe, that being first joyned to Christ the head, and into one Church, which is his body, and so par-doned and made the sons of God, they may be a peculiar people sanctified to Christ, and may mortifie the flesh and overcome the world and the Devil, and being zealous of good works, may serve God in Holiness and Righteousness, and may live in the special Love and Communion of the Saints, and in Hope of Christs Coming, and of Everlasting life.

(*) *In the Trinity of Persons.*

I do heartily take this one God (*) for my only God, and my chief good; and this Jesus Christ for my only Lord-Redeemer and Saviour, and this Holy Ghost for my Sanctifier; and the Doctrine by him revealed, and witnessed by his Miracles, and now contained in the holy Scriptures, I do take for the Law of God, and the Rule of my Faith, and Life. And Repenting unfeignedly of my sins, I do Resolve through the grace of God, sincerely to obey him, both in Holiness to God, and Righteousness to men, and in special love to the Saints, and Communion with them, against all the temptations of the Devil, the World, and my own Flesh, and this to death.

Note that the first eight Articles of the following Catechism, do contain the foregoing Professions and the four last do express the particulars Contained in the two words *Holiness* and *Righteousness*, and in the 10th Commandments.

The

The CATECHISM.

Qu. 1. What do you believe concerning God?

1. There is one only God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: who is infinite in Being, Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; the maker, preserver, & disposer of all things: and the most Just and Merciful Lord of all.

1 Cor. 8. 4, 6. Mat. 28. 19. 1 Joh. 5. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Psal. 139. 7, 8, 9. Isa. 40. 17. Rev. 4. 8. Psal. 147. 5. Neh. 9. 6. Psal. 135. 6. Rev. 15. 3. Exo. 34. 6.

Qu. 2. How did God make man, and what Law did he give him?

2. God made man for himself, in his own image, and gave him a righteous Law, requiring perfect obedience upon pain of Death.

Pro. 16. 4. Gen. 1. 26, 27. & 2. 16, 17. Rom. 6. 23. Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

Qu. 3. Did man keep or break this Law?

3. Man being tempted by Satan, did wilfully sin; and so fall from God and happiness, under the Curse of the Law, and so that we are by nature dead in sin, and prone to no more evil continually, & to grow worse, & to depart yet further from God.

Gen. 3. Rom. 5. 12. 18. & 3. 23. & 8. 23. Eph. 2. 12. Hos. 14. 1. Eph. 2. 2, 3. 5. Gal. 3. 10, 13. Act. 26. 18. Gen. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 1. Hos. 13. 7 & 13. 2. Psal. 78. 17. Mat. 12. 45. 2 Tim. 2. 16.

Qu. 4. How was man Redeemed?

4. God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son to be their Redeemer: who, being God, and one with the Father, did take to him our nature, and became man, being conceived by the holy Ghost in the Virgin Mary, and born of her, and called Jesus Christ; and having lived on earth to instruct us, and wrought many Miracles for a witness of his truth, he gave up himself a sacrifice for our sins, and a ransom for us, in suffering death on the Cross: and being buryed, he rose again the third day, and afterward ascended into Heaven, where he is Lord of all in glory with the Father.

Joh. 3. 16. & 7. 1. Joh. 2. 2. Joh. 4. 42. Rom. 5. 9, 10. Joh. 10. 30. & 17. 11. Heb. 2. 14, 16. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Luk. 1. 27, 35. Mat. 1. 18, 25. 10. Heb. 4. 15. & 7. 26. Heb. 2. 3, 4. Act. 2. 22. & 7. 36. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 9. 28. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Mat. 27. 35, 38. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12. Act. 1. 9, 11. Eph. 4. 8, 9, 10, 11. Act. 1. 36. & 2. 36. Rom. 14. 9. Mat. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22.

Qu. 5. How and on what terms is salvation offered in the Gospel?

5. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath ordained in his Testament that all they that receive him by a true effectual faith, and that by true Repentance do forsake the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and heartily turn from them unto God, shall freely receive the Pardon of their sins, and become the sons of God, and Heirs of everlasting life,* and that if they sincerely love and obey him to the death, they shall be glorified: and that they that will not do all this, shall be damned. And this

1 Cor. 9. 14. Heb. 9. 15. Col. 2. 6. Joh. 1. 12. Mar. 16. 15, 16. Gal. 5. 4. Jam. 2. 24. Act. 26. 18. Luk. 24. 47. Act. 5. 31. & 11. 18. & 20. 21. & 3. 19. & 2. 38. & 8. 22. & 24. 20. Luk. 13. 3. Mar. 4. 12. Isa. 55. 7. & 1. 16. Ezek. 18. 21. to 32. & 33. 11. to 20. Mat. 19. 29. & 10. 37. Luk. 14. 26, 27. 33. Tit. 3. 5, 7. Heb. 5. 14. Col. 1. 23. Joh. 15. 1. to 12. & 8. 31. Rom. 11. 22. Heb. 10. 26. 38. Rev. 2. 12. 2 Th. 2. 12. Joh. 5. 29.

* The conditionality of the promise denyeth not the certainty of faith and perseverance.

Apostles, that they might fully reveal the doctrine of Christ, and by multitudes of evident miracles and wonderful gifts, to be the great witness of Christ, and of the truth of his holy word, and also to dwell and work in all that are drawn to believe, that being first joyned to Christ the head, and into one Church, which is his body, and so pardoned and made the sons of God, they may be a peculiar people sanctified to Christ, and may mortifie the flesh and overcome the world and the Devil, and being zealous of good works, may serve God in Holiness and Righteousness, and may live in the special Love and Communion of the Saints, and in Hope of Christs Coming, and of Everlasting life.

(*) *In the Trinity of Persons.*

I do heartily take this one God (*) for my only God, and my chief good; and this Jesus Christ for my only Lord-Redeemer and Saviour, and this Holy Ghost for my Sanctifier; and the Doctrine by him revealed, and witnessed by his Miracles, and now contained in the holy Scriptures, I do take for the Law of God, and the Rule of my Faith, and Life. And Repenting unfeignedly of my sins, I do Resolve through the grace of God, sincerely to obey him, both in Holiness to God, and Righteousness to men, and in special love to the Saints, and Communion with them, against all the temptations of the Devil, the World, and my own Flesh, and this to death.

Note that the first eight Articles of the following Catechism, do contain the foregoing Professions and the four last do express the particulars Contained in the two words *Holiness* and *Righteousness*, and in the 10th Commandments.

The CATECHISM.

Qu. 1. What do you believe concerning God?

1. There is one only God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: Who is infinite in Being, Power, Wisdom, and Goodness: the maker, preserver, & disposer of all things: and the most Just and Merciful Lord of all.

1 Cor. 8. 4, 6. Mat. 28. 13. 1 Joh. 5. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Psal. 139. 7, 8, 9. Isa. 40. 17. Rev. 4. 8. Psal. 147. 5. Neh. 9. 6. Psal. 135. 6. Rev. 15. 3. Exo. 34. 6.

Qu. 2. How did God make man, and what Law did he give him?

2. God made man for himself, in his own image, and gave him a righteous Law, requiring perfect obedience upon pain of Death.

Pro. 16. 4. Gen. 1. 26, 27. & 2. 16, 17. Rom. 6. 23. Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

Qu. 3. Did man keep or break this Law?

3. Man being tempted by Satan, did wilfully sin; and so fall from God and Happiness, under the wrath of God, the Curse of the Law, and the Power of the Devil: so that we are by nature dead in sin, and prone to do more evil continually, & to grow worse, & to depart yet further from God.

Gen. 3. Rom. 5. 12. 18. & 3. 23. & 6. 23. Eph. 2. 12. Hos. 14. 1. Eph. 2. 2. 3. 5. Gal. 3. 10. 13. Act. 26. 18. Gen. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 1. Hos. 11. 7. & 13. 2. Psal. 78. 17. Mat. 12. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 16.

Qu. 4. How was man Redeemed?

4. God so loved the world, that he gave his only son to be their Redeemer: who, being God, and one with the Father, did take to him our nature, and became man, being conceived by the Holy Ghost in the Virgin Mary, and born of her, and called Jesus Christ; and having lived on earth without sin, and wrought many Miracles for a witness of his truth, he gave up himself a sacrifice for our sins, and a ransom for us, in suffering death on the Cross, and being buryed, he rose again the third day, and afterward ascended into Heaven, where he is Lord of all in glory with the Father.

Joh. 3. 16, 17. 1 Joh. 2. 2. Joh. 4. 42. Rom. 9. 5. Joh. 10. 30. & 17. 11. Heb. 2. 14, 16. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Luk. 1. 27, 35. Mat. 1. 18, 23. 20. Heb. 4. 15. & 7. 26. Heb. 2. 3, 4. Act. 2. 22. & 7. 56. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 9. 26. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Mat. 27. 31, 35, 60. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12. Act. 1. 9. 11. Eph. 4. 8, 9, 10, 11. Act. 10. 36. & 2. 36. Rom. 14. 9. Mat. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22.

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Mar 16.15,16. Mat.28. 19,20,21.

this he hath commanded his Ministers to preach all the world.

Joh.14.26. & 15.26. 1 Pet.1. 10,11,12. & 2 Pet.1.21. 2 Tim.3. 16. Joh.16.13. Ep.3.3, 5. & 2.20. & 4.11, 12,13. Mat.28.20. 2 Tim.6.14. Isa.8 20. Rev.22.18,19. Heb.3. 2,3. & 2.3,4. Acts 2. 22. & 19.11. to 19. Gal.3.1,2,3,5. Joh. 14.12. & 3.2. & 10. 25,37,38. 1 Cor.14.

Qu. 6. How did Christ reveal and prove his doctrine?

6. The Holy Ghost was sent by the Father and the Son to inspire and guide the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists, that they might truly and fully reveal the Doctrine of Christ, and deliver it in Scripture to the Church as the Rule of our Faith and Life: And by multitudes of evident uncontrolled miracles, to be the great witness of Christ, and of the truth of his holy word.

Act 26.18. Joh.6,44. Rom. 8.9,10,11. Act. 16.14. Eze. 36 25. Act.15.9. 1 Cor.6.11, 19. Col.1.18. & 2.19. Eph.5.30,31,32. & 3. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 13,27 Rom 3.24. Gal. 4.6. Joh. 1.12. Gal. 3.26. Tit.2.14. 1 Pet 2.9. 1 Cor.6.11. Rom.8.1. to 14. Gal. 5 17,24. 1 Joh 2.15. Gal.6.14. 1 Joh.3.8. Luk. 1.74, 75. 1 Pet. 1.22. Joh. 18 34,35. Eph. 2.19. Heb.10 25. 2 Cor 1. 9. 2 Pet.3,11,12. Tit. 1.2. & 3.7.

Qu. 7. How are men brought to partake of Christ and life?

7. The same Holy Spirit doth by the word enlighten mens understandings, and soften and open their hearts, and turn them from the power of Satan unto God, by faith in Christ: that being joyned to Christ the Head, and into one Church which is his body, and freely justified, and made the sons of God, they may be a sanctified peculiar people unto him; and may overcome the flesh, the world, and the devil; and being zealous of good works, may serve God in holiness and Righteousness, and may live in the special love and Communion of the Saints, and in hope of Christs coming, and of Everlasting Life.

Acts 1.11. 1 Cor.15. 1 Thes. 4. 16,17,18. Joh.5.22,27.2 Cor 5. 10. Rom.2.6,7. Mat. 25.2 Thes-1. 8,9,10. & 2.12. 2 Tim.4.8, 18. Luk. 10.11. Joh. 17.24. & 12.26. Mat. 13.40. to 43.

Qu. 8. What shall be the end of the Righteous and of the wicked?

8. The Lord Jesus Christ will come again at the end of this world, and will raise the bodies of all men from the dead, and judge all men according to their works: And the Righteous shall go into Everlasting Life, and the rest into everlasting punishment.

Qu. 9.

Qu. 9. What are the publike means which Christ hath appointed to salvation?

9. Christ hath appointed that fit men shall be ordained his ministers to disciple the uncalled, and baptize all that are Disciples in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and to Congregate his Disciples, and to Oversee and Guide the several Congregations, and each member thereof particularly to Teach them the Word of God, to Pray and Praise God with them and for them; to administer the Lords Supper in remembrance of him; and to Bless them in the name of the Lord: Especially on the Lords day, which he hath appointed for holy Communion in such works: Also to rebuke with Authority the scandalous and unruly, and to reject those that are obstinately impenitent and unreformed.

It is therefore the Peoples duty to joyn with such Churches in the foresaid worship of God; and to know, hear, submit to, and obey their Guides that are over them in the Lord, and to avoid discord and division, and to live in Unity, Love and Peace.

Mat. 28. 19,20. Mat. 16 15. Rom. 10. 7,8. 14,15. 2 Tim. 2. 2. Act. 14.23. Act. 2 42 & 20.7,28. Eph. 4. 11,12,14. Ezek. 3 17, 18,21. Mal. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 12. 17, 28,29. Col. 1. 28. Act. 26 18. Jam. 5.14. Neh. 11 17. & 9. 5. & 8. 4,5,6,8. 1 Cor. 10. 16. & 9. 13. 14. & 11. 24. Nu. 6. 23, 24. Deut. 10. 8. 1. Chr. 23. 13. Heb. 7. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 1. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 14,15. Rev. 1. 10. Acts 20. 7. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Mat. 26. 29. Joh. 20. 1, 19. Tit. 2. 15. & 1. 9, 13. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 19, 20. & 3. 5 Tit. 3. 10. 1 Cor. 5 4, 5, 11, 13. Acts 2. 42 Heb. 13. 7, 17, 24. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. 1 Tim 5. 17. 1 Cor. 16. 16. Luk. 12. 42. & 10. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 10. & 3. 3. Rom 16. 17. Eph. 4. 2, 15, 16. Col. 2. 2. 2 Cor 13. 11.

Qu. 10. What are the secret holy Duties which every one must use?

10. The secret Duties of Holiness are frequent and serious meditation of God and his works and word, especially of our own sin and danger, of our Redemption, of our duty, of Death, Judgement, and the endless Joy and Torment after it: The diligent examination of our own hearts, and watching over our Thoughts, Affections, Words and Actions: The mortifying of our sins, especially Unbelief, Error, hardness of heart, Pride, worldliness, flesh-pleasing and Hypocrisie: The exercise of all graces; watching against Temptations, and resolute resisting them: And secret prayer to God.

Psal. 104. 34. & 119. 97, 99. & 1. 2. & 63. 6. & 77. 12. & 143. 5. & 119. 59. Hag. 1. 5. Deut. 32. 29. Psal 50. 22. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Psal. 4. 4 Pro. 4. 25. Mat. 5. 28. & 12. 34. & 15. 18, 19. Psal. 119. 113. & 39. 1. Mar. 13. 33. Luk. 21. 8, 34. 1 Cor. 10. 12 Col. 4. 5 Heb. 3. 12, 13, 14. Mat. 24. 4. Luk. 12. 15. Rom. 13. 1, 14. 12. 6. 6, 6. 1 Cor 9. 18. Jer. 17. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 6 & 4. 7. Acts 24. 16. Mat. 26. 41 1 Cor. 16. 13. Eph. 6. 11. to 19 1 Thes. 5. 17 Act. 10 9. Luk. 6 12.

Qu. 11. What Private Duties of Holiness must be performed with others?

11. The Private Duties of Holiness to be performed with others, are Parents and Masters must teach their children and servants the word, and fear of God, & pray with them, and for them, and hinder it from sin: children and servants must willingly Learn and Obey: we must seek advice in the matters of our salvation;

Ep. 6 4, 9. Deu 6, 7. & 11, 18. Jos. 24. 15. Psal. 101. 2 3. Acts 10. 30. Gen 18. 19. Pro. 22. 6, 15. & 23. 13. 1 Sam. 2. 23 25. Col. 3. 20, 22. Eph. 6. 1, 5, 6, 7. Deut 21. 18, 20. Mal. 2. 7. Jer. 6 16. & 50. 5. 1 Cor. 14 35. Acts 2. 7. & 10. 30. Rom. 15. 14. Col. 3 16. Heb.

3.13. Eph. 4.29. 1 Pet. 3.1,2. Jam 3 13. Jam. 5. 16. Act. 12. 5 12. Col 1.3. & 4 3. 1 Thes. 3.10. Joh. 20.19. Act. 20.7. Act. 12.12. & 20. 30. Phil. 4. 6. 2 Cor 9.12. Pſal. 50. 14. 1 Cor. 7. 5. Rom. 12.15.

Deut. 1 17. 2 Chron. 19.6,7. Deut. 17.18, 19. Joſ. 1 8. Iſa. 56. 1. Zach. 7.9. Rom. 13.1, 2,3. 1 Pet 2.13. Eph. 6.1,5. Col. 3. 20,22, 23,24. Mat 19 19. & 22.39. & 7.12. Eph. 4.2. Phil. 2.3,15 Mat. 20.16 Eph. 4 25. Tit. 2.12. Col. 3.25. 1 Cor. 6.7,8. Mat. 5.21,22, 27,28,39,44,45. Eph. 4.28. Exo. 23 1. & 20. 6 Pſal. 15.5. Ex. 20.17 Col 3 13. Eph. 4.2. Mat. 5 44. Gal. 6.10. Heb. 13 16. Mat. 25. Phil. 2.4,20,21. 2 Cor. 8.11,12.

Qu. 12. What are the neceſſary Duties of Righteouſneſs and mercy towards men?

ſalvation: Eſpecially of our Teachers: we daily admoniſh and exhort one another: uſing tions and Edyfying Conference, and a wi converſation; Confeſſing our faults one to ther, and praying with and for one another ſpecially on the Lords Day, and on extraord occaſions of Humiliation or Thankſgiving.

12. The neceſſary duties of Righteou and Mercy to are theſe: Superiours Rule for God, and Common-good, Juſtice and mercy: Inferiours muſt willingly bey them in the Lord. We muſt love our ne bours as our ſelves; and do as we would be by; behaving our ſelves to all men in lowli and meekneſs, harmleſneſs, ſobriety and truth: wronging any in their Bodies, Chaſtity, Eſta or Names, no not in Deſire, but forbearing forgiving one another, loving our very En mies; and doing good to all, according to o Power.

FINIS.